









# BUDDHA

AND HIS

PARABLES.

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## BUDDHA AND HIS PARABLES.

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Buddha was an Indian religious reformer. Let us begin with a short account of his life, which was a very beautiful one.

Five hundred and fifty years before Christ, in a city in North Oude, Kapilavastu (the modern Nagar Khas), there dwelt a king called Suddhodana. He was married to a beautiful wife, the virgin Maya.

It came to pass that this king and queen were warned by the devas or angels that a great Teacher, a "Buddha," would be born in the womb of the queen.

The word "Buddha" means "he who has divine knowledge (bodhi).<sup>•</sup>" Buddha entered the womb of his mother in the form of a white elephant. This in India is a favourite image for the

divine spirit. India loves symbols. In due time a little infant was born.

Soothsayers were consulted by the king. They pronounced the following:—

“The young boy will, without doubt, be either a king of kings, or a great Buddha. If he is destined to be a great Buddha, four Presaging Tokens will make his mission plain. He will see—

“1. An old man.

“2. A sick man.

“3. A corpse.

“4. A holy recluse.

“If he fails to see these four presaging tokens of an avatâra, he will be simply a Chakravartin (king of earthly kings).”

King Suddhodana, who was a trifle worldly, was very much comforted by the last prediction of the soothsayers. He thought in his heart, It will be an easy thing to keep these four presaging tokens from the young prince. So he gave orders that three magnificent palaces should at once be built—the Palace of Spring, the Palace of Summer, the Palace of Winter. These palaces, as we learn from the *Lalita Vistara*, were the most

beautiful palaces ever conceived on earth. Indeed, they were quite able to cope in splendour with Vaijayanta, the immortal palace of Indra himself. Costly pavilions were built out in all directions, with ornamented porticoes and furnished doors. Turrets and pinnacles soared into the sky. Dainty little windows gave light to the rich apartments. Galleries, balustrades, and delicate trellis-work were abundant everywhere. A thousand bells tinkled on each roof. We seem to have the lacquered Chinese edifices of the pattern which architects believe to have flourished in early India. The gardens of these fine palaces rivalled the chess-board in the rectangular exactitude of their parterres and trellis-work bowers. Cool lakes nursed on their calm bosoms storks and cranes, wild geese and tame swans; ducks, also, as parti-coloured as the white, red, and blue lotuses amongst which they swam. Bending to these lakes were bowery trees—the champak, the acacia serisha, and the beautiful asoka-tree with its orange-scarlet flowers. Above rustled the mimosa, the fan-palm, and the feathery pippala, Buddha's tree. The air was

heavy with the strong scent of the tuberose and the Arabian jasmine. One such garden has since appeared in India, I cannot help thinking. It was constructed by another Chakravartin—the “Company Bahadur,” as the natives called him. It was called the Botanical Garden, and its smooth green slopes were washed by the river Hooghly. Stately Indiamen sailed past to the great city of Calcutta hard by, and frail Indian craft with ragged sails. Pleasure-seekers, the poor and the rich, sought the shade of its unrivalled trees—the plantain, the palm, the camphor cinnamon, the Indian fig. One of the latter shaded about a quarter of a mile of the garden. I have seen this rare garden, but no one will see it again. In a terrific typhoon the swollen river swept it completely away. Another typhoon disposed of the great Chakravartin, the East India Company.

It must be mentioned that strong ramparts were prepared round the palaces of Kapilavastu, to keep out all old men, sick men, and recluses, and, I must add, to keep in the prince.

And a more potent safeguard still was designed. When the prince was old enough to



marry, all the young girls of the kingdom were marshalled before him. To each he gave a rich bangle, or a brooch set in diamonds, or some expensive gew-gaw. But the spies who had been set to watch him, remarked that he gazed upon them all with listless eye. When the rich collection of jewels was quite exhausted, a maiden of exquisite beauty entered the apartment. Buddha gazed at her spell-bound, and felt confused because he had no gift to offer to her. The young girl without any false modesty went to him, and said abruptly—

“Young man, what offence have I given thee, that thou shouldst contemn me thus?”

“I do not contemn thee, young girl,” said the prince, “but in truth thou hast come in rather late!” And he sent for some other jewels of great value, which he presented to the young girl.

“Is it proper, young man,” she said, with a slight blush, “that I should receive such costly gifts from thee?”

“The ornaments are mine,” he said, “therefore take them away!”

The young girl, her name was Gopa, answered

simply, "Not having any trinkets I could not deck myself, but now I will bear me bravely." The spies, cunning in furtive glances and blushes, reported everything to the king.

The king was delighted that his son had fallen in love. He at once sent the Brahmin Purohita to Sakya Dandapani, the young girl's father, to demand her hand in marriage for his son. Dandapani's reply to the king was this:—

"The noble young man has lived all his life in the sloth and luxury of a palace, and my family never gives a daughter excepting to a man of courage and strength, one who can wrestle and ply the bow, and wield the two-handed sword."

This answer made the king sad. Many other haughty Sakya families had previously said, "Our daughters refuse to come near a young milksop."

When the king confided the source of his sadness to his son, the latter said, with a smile—

"If this is the cause of thy grief, O father, let me try conclusions with these valiant young Sakyas."

"Canst thou wrestle? Canst thou shoot with the bow?"

“Summon these young heroes, and we will see.”

Immense importance was attached by the Aryas to the festival of the Summer Solstice. The Greeks had their Olympia, when the whole population met together to witness the wrestling, the bow-shooting, the chariot races. The victor in these was carried home in a pompous procession. In ancient India a woman, famous for her beauty, was made the chief prize, and the marriage was called Swayamvara (marriage by athletic competition). By this institution the manhood and courage of the State were powerfully stimulated. It must be borne in mind that a skilful use of the bow, the club, and the war-chariot meant independence to the community. On the other hand, an unskilful use subjected the whole tribe to be captured and detained as prisoners of war. They might be sacrificed to Rudra at the autumn festival. Or if they were lucky enough to escape this, they were certain to be stripped naked, man, woman, and child, and be slaves for the rest of their lives. As details of the memorable Swayamvara where the beautiful Gopa was the prize are

rather meagre, perhaps I may be permitted to supply some from the epics.

A vast plain was selected on these occasions, and levelled and swept. Round this pavilions and lacquered palaces of the Chinese pattern were hastily erected. Their dainty spires and columns and roofs stood out against the blue sky, "like the snowy pinnacles of the mountain range Kailasa," says the Mahabharata. Carpets and sofas and thrones were spread in these for the kings and competing heroes. In front of each pavilion were heavy awnings on glittering poles. The powerful perfumes of India, the aloes, and the balm, could be scented from afar. The priests poured clarified butter into the holy fire. Mummers and dancers and singers performed miracle plays, not differing much from the modern pantomime; religious disputants chopped logic. Each guest was expected to be lavish of his gifts. This made the poor man as merry as the rich one.

A competition for a high-born princess includes learning, as well as the athleticism. Buddha first eclipses his neighbours in the former. Then come swimming, jumping, running, and none have a

chance against him. Then comes the important issue of wrestling. This in India has been cultivated and honoured from time immemorial. Buddha first vanquishes Nanda and Ananda. Ananda is the brother of the unfriendly Devadatta, who next comes forward to avenge him :—

“ Then the young Sakya Devadatta, puffed with the pride of race and the insolence of strength, came forth to the contest. He circled round with much rapidity and skill, and watching his opportunity he sprang upon the prince.”

But Buddha is merciful as well as strong. He causes the conceited young man to execute a somersault in the air, and then catches him before he can be hurt. Afterwards, all the young heroes in a body attack the prince, but with the same ill-fortune.

But the Aryas, like their descendants, the Anglo-Saxons of Crecy, were unrivalled bowmen. Archery was the real test of a hero in the old epics. Preparations now take place for that crucial issue.

Ananda sets up a drum of iron. Devadatta sets up another at double the distance. Sundarananda

sets up a third drum at a distance of six krosas. Dandapani sets up a drum at a greater distance still. By Dandapani's drum are seven tall palm-trees, and beyond this a figure of a wild beast in iron.

Ananda lets fly a shaft. It pierces the drum which he had set up. Beyond that distance he cannot shoot. Devadatta pierces his drum. Sundarananda pierces the drum set up at six krosas. Dandapani smites his drum. But beyond his selected distance each archer is powerless.

And now it is the turn of Buddha to shoot, but no bow is strong enough to bear the strength of his arm. One after another they break in the stringing. At last it is recollected that, in one of the shrines, there is the bow of his grandfather, Simhahanu (Lion Jaw), a weapon so mighty that no warrior can even lift it. Attendants are set off to fetch it. The strongest Sakyas attempt to string it, but all in vain.

Then the prince himself takes up the bow of the mighty Lion Jaw. With ease he strings it, and the sound of its stringing re-echoes through

the wide city of Kapilavastu. Amid immense excitement he adjusts an arrow and prepares to shoot. His shaft transfixes the first drum, the second drum, the third drum, the fourth drum, and then, tearing swiftly through the seven trees and the wild beast of iron, buries itself like the lightning in the ground.

Other competitions take place. The prince shows his superiority in riding the horse, riding the elephant with an iron goad ; in poetry, painting, music, dancing, and even jocularly ; in the "art of the fist," and in "kicking." He also shines in his knowledge of occult mysteries, in "prophecy," in the explanation of dreams, in "magic," in "joining his hands in prayer."

After this manner Buddha won the beautiful Gopa. She is called Yasodhara in the Southern narrative.

Perhaps, at this time, the good King Suddhodana was more happy than even the prince in the ecstasy of his honeymoon. He had found for that prince the most beautiful wife in the world. He had built him palaces that were the talk of the whole of Hindostan. No Indian maharaja before

had had such beautiful palaces, such lovely wives and handmaidens, such dancing girls, singers, jewels, luxuries. In his bowers of camphor-cinnamon, amid the enchanting perfumes of the tuberose and the santal-tree, his life must surely be one long bliss, a dream that has no awakening.

But suddenly this exultation was dashed with a note of woe. The king dreamt that he saw his son in the russet cowl of the beggar-hermit. Awaking in a fright, he called an eunuch.

"Is my son in the palace?" he asked abruptly.

"He is, O king."

The dream frightened the king very much, and he ordered five hundred guards to be placed at every corner of the walls of the Palace of Summer. And the soothsayers having announced that a Buddha, if he escapes at all, always escapes by the Gate of Benediction, folding doors of immense size were here erected. The sound of their swing on their hinges resounded to a distance of half a yogana (three and a half miles). Five hundred men were required to stir either gate. These precautions completely quieted the king's mind, until one day he received a terrible piece of news.



His son had seen the first of the four presaging tokens. He had seen an Old Man.

• This is how the matter came about. The king had prepared a garden even more beautiful than the garden of the Palace of Summer. A sooth-sayer had told him that if he could succeed in showing the prince this garden, the prince would be content to remain in it with his wives for ever. No task seemed easier than this, so it was arranged that on a certain day the prince should be driven thither in his chariot. But, of course, immense precautions had to be taken to keep all old men and sick men and corpses from his sight. Quite an army of soldiers was told off for this duty, and the city was decked with flags. The path of the prince was strewn with flowers and scents, and adorned with vases of the rich kadali plant. Above were costly hangings and garlands, and pagodas of bells.

But, lo and behold! as the prince was driving along, plump under the wheels of his chariot, and before the very noses of the silken nobles and the warriors with javelins and shields, he saw an unusual sight. This was an old man, very

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decrepit and very broken. The veins and nerves of his body were swollen and prominent; his teeth chattered; he was wrinkled, bald, and his few remaining hairs were of dazzling whiteness; he was bent very nearly double, and tottered feebly along, supported by a stick.

"What is this, O coachman?" said the prince, "A man with his blood all dried up, and his muscles glued to his body! His head is white; his teeth knock together; he is scarcely able to move along, even with the aid of that stick!"

"Prince," said the coachman, "this is Old Age. This man's senses are dulled; suffering has destroyed his spirit; he is condemned by his neighbours. Unable to help himself, he has been abandoned in this forest."

"Is this a peculiarity of his family?" demanded the prince, "or is it the law of the world? Tell me quickly."

"Prince," said the coachman, "it is neither a law of his family, nor a law of the kingdom. In every being youth is conquered by age. Your own father and mother and all your relations will end in old age. There is no other issue to humanity."

“Then youth is blind and ignorant,” said the prince, “and sees not the future. • If this body is to be the abode of old age, what have I to do with pleasure and its intoxications? Turn round the chariot, and drive me back to the palace !”

Consternation was in the minds of all the courtiers at this untoward occurrence; but the odd circumstance of all was that no one was ever able to bring to condign punishment the miserable author of the mischief. The old man could never be found.

King Suddhodana was at first quite beside himself with tribulation. Soldiers were summoned from the distant provinces, and a cordon of detachments thrown out to a distance of four miles in each direction, to keep the other presaging tokens from the prince. By-and-by the king became a little more quieted. A ridiculous accident had interfered with his plans: “If my son could see the Garden of Happiness he never would become a hermit.” The king determined that another attempt should be made. But this time the precautions were doubled.

On the first occasion the prince left the Palace

of Summer by the eastern gate. The second expedition was through the southern gate.

But another untoward event occurred. As the prince was driving along in his chariot, suddenly he saw close to him a man emaciated, ill, loathsome, burning with fever. Companionless, uncared for, he tottered along, breathing with extreme difficulty.

"Coachman," said the prince, "what is this man, livid and loathsome in body, whose senses are dulled, and whose limbs are withered? His stomach is oppressing him; he is covered with filth. Scarcely can he draw the breath of life!"

"Prince," said the coachman, "this is Sickness. This poor man is attacked with a grievous malady. Strength and comfort have shunned him. He is friendless, hopeless, without a country, without an asylum. The fear of death is before his eyes."

"If the health of man," said Buddha, "is but the sport of a dream, and the fear of coming evils can put on so loathsome a shape, how can the wise man, who has seen what life really

means, indulge in its vain delights? Turn back, coachman, and drive me to the palace!"

The angry king, when he heard what had occurred, gave orders that the sick man should be seized and punished, but although a price was placed on his head, and he was searched for far and wide, he could never be caught. A clue to this is furnished by a passage in the *Lalita Vistara*. The sick man was in reality one of the Spirits of the Pure Abode, masquerading in sores and spasms. These Spirits of the Pure Abode are also called the Buddhas of the Past, in many passages. The answers of the coachman were due to their inspiration.

It would almost seem as if some influence, malefic or otherwise, was stirring the good King Sudhodana. Unmoved by failure, he urged the prince to a third effort. The chariot this time was to set out by the western gate. Greater precautions than ever were adopted. The chain of guards was posted at least twelve miles off from the Palace of summer. But the Buddhas of the Past again arrested the prince. His chariot was suddenly crossed by a phantom funeral pro-

cession. A phantom corpse, smeared with the orthodox mud, and spread with a sheet, was carried on a bier. Phantom women wailed, and phantom musicians played on the drum and the Indian flute. No doubt also, phantom Brahmins chanted hymns to Jatavedas, to bear away the immortal part of the dead man to the home of the Pitris.

“What is this?” said the prince. “Why do these women beat their breasts and tear their hair? Why do these good folks cover their heads with the dust of the ground. And that strange form upon its litter, wherefore is it so rigid?”

“Prince,” said the charioteer, “this is Death! Yon form, pale and stiffened, can never again walk and move. Its owner has gone to the unknown caverns of Yama. His father, his mother, his child, his wife cry out to him, but he cannot hear.”

Buddha was sad.

“Woe be to youth, which is the sport of age! Woe be to health, which is the sport of many maladies! Woe be to life, which is as a breath! Woe be to the idle pleasures which debauch

humanity! But for the 'five aggregations' there would be no age, sickness, nor death. Go back to the city. I must compass the deliverance."

A fourth time the prince was urged by his father to visit the Garden of Happiness. The chain of guards this time was sixteen miles away. The exit was by the northern gate. But suddenly a calm man of gentle mien, wearing an ochre-red cowl, was seen in the roadway.

"Who is this," said the prince, "rapt, gentle, peaceful in mien? He looks as if his mind were far away elsewhere. He carries a bowl in his hand."

"Prince, this is the New Life," said the charioteer. "That man is of those whose thoughts are fixed on the eternal Brahma [Brahmacharin]. He seeks the divine voice. He seeks the divine vision. He carries the alms-bowl of the holy beggar [bhikshu]. His mind is calm, because the gross lures of the lower life can vex it no more."

"Such a life I covet," said the prince. "The lusts of man are like the sea-water—they mock man's thirst instead of quenching it. I will seek the divine vision, and give immortality to man!"

King Suddhodana was beside himself. He placed five hundred conseleled Sakyas at every gate of the Palace of Summer. Chains of sentries were round the walls, which were raised and strengthened. A phalanx of loving wives, armed with javelins, was posted round the prince's bed to "narrowly watch" him. The king ordered also all the allurements of sense to be constantly presented to the prince.

"Let the women of the zenana cease not for an instant their concerts and mirth and sports. Let them shine in silks and sparkle in diamonds and emeralds."

The allegory is in reality a great battle between two camps—the denizens of the Kamaloka, or the Domains of Appetite, and the denizens of the Brahmaloika, the Domains of pure Spirit. The latter are unseen, but not unfelt.

For one day, when the prince reclined on a silken couch listening to the sweet crooning of four or five brown-skinned, large-eyed Indian girls, his eyes suddenly assumed a dazed and absorbed look, and the rich hangings and garlands and intricate trellis-work of the golden apartment were still



present, but dim to his mind. And music and voices, more sweet than he had ever listened to, seemed faintly to reach him. I will write down some of the verses.

"Mighty prop of humanity  
 March in the pathway of the Rishis of old,  
 Go forth from this city !  
 Upon this desolate earth,  
 When thou hast acquired the priceless knowledge of the Jinās,  
 When thou hast become a perfect Buddha,  
 Give to all flesh the baptism (river) of the Kingdom of Righteous-  
 ness,  
 Thou who once didst sacrifice thy feet, thy hands, thy precious  
 body, and all thy riches for the world,  
 Thou whose life is pure, save flesh from its miseries !  
 In the presence of reviling be patient, O conqueror of self !  
 Lord of those who possess two feet, go forth on thy mission !  
 Conquer the evil one and his army."

Thus run some more of these gathas :—

"Light of the world ! [lamp du monde—Foucaux],  
 In former kalpas this vow was made by thee :  
 'For the worlds that are a prey to death and sickness I will be  
 a refuge !'  
 Lion of men, master of those that walk on two feet, the time  
 for thy mission has come !  
 Under the sacred Bo-tree acquire immortal dignity, and give  
 Amrita (immortality) to all !

When thou wert a king (in a former existence), and a subject insolently said to thee: 'These lands and cities, give them to me!'

Thou wert rejoiced and not troubled.

Once when thou wert a virtuous Rishi, and a cruel king in anger hacked off thy limbs, in thy death agony milk flowed from thy feet and thy hands.

When thou didst dwell on a mountain as the Rishi Syama,<sup>c</sup> a king having transfixed thee with poisoned arrows, didst thou not forgive this king?

When thou wert the king of antelopes, didst thou not save thine enemy the hunter from a torrent?

When thou wert an elephant and a hunter pierced thee, thou forgavest him, and didst reward him with thy beautiful tusks!

Once when thou wert a she-bear thou didst save a man from a torrent swollen with snow. Thou didst feed him on roots and fruit until he grew strong;

And when he went away and brought back men to kill thee, thou forgavest him!

Once when thou wert the white horse,<sup>1</sup>

In pity for the suffering of man,

Thou didst fly across heaven to the region of the evil demons, To secure the happiness of mankind.

Persecutions without end,

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<sup>1</sup> Yearly the sun-god as the zodiacal horse (Aries) was supposed by the Vedic Aryans to die to save all flesh. Hence the horse-sacrifice.

Revilings and many prisons,  
Death and murder,  
These hast thou suffered with love and patience,  
Forgiving thine executioners.  
Kingless, men seek thee for a king !  
Stablish them in the way of Brahma and of the ten virtues,  
That when they pass away from amongst their fellow-men, they  
• may all go to the abode of Brahma ”

But the good king Suddhodana opposed the bright spirits.

It is recorded that he offered to resign his royal umbrella in favour of his son. His urgent entreaty that the prince should abandon all thoughts of a religious life was answered thus :—

“ Sire, I desire four gifts. Grant me these, and I will remain in the Palace of Summer.”

“ What are they ? ” said King Suddhodana.

“ Grant that age may never seize me. Grant that I may retain the bright hues of youth. Grant that sickness may have no power over me. Grant that my life may be without end.”

• This gives us the very essence of the apologue.  
Mara, the tempter, describes the story in a sentence :—

“This is a son of King Suddhodana, who has left his kingdom to obtain deathless life [amrita].”

About this time Gopa had a strange dream. She beheld the visible world with its mountains upheaved and its forests overturned. The sun was darkened, the moon fell from heaven. Her own diadem had fallen off her head, and all her beautiful pearl necklaces and gold chains were broken. Her poor hands and feet were cut off; and the diadem and ornaments of her husband were also scattered in confusion upon the bed where they were both lying. In the darkness of night lurid flames came forth from the city, and the gilded bars that had been recently put up to detain the prince were snapped. Afar the great ocean was boiling with a huge turmoil, and Mount Meru shook to its very foundations.

She consulted her husband about this dream, and he gave her the rather obvious interpretation that this dismemberment of her mortal body, and this passing away of the visible universe and its splendours, was of good, and not bad augury.

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<sup>1</sup> Lalita Vistara, p. 287.

She was becoming detached from the seen, the organic; her inner vision was opening. She had seen the splendid handle of Buddha's parasol broken. This meant that in a short time he was to become the "unique parasol of the world."

But to bring about this result more quickly, the Spirits of the Pure Abode have conceived a new project. The beautiful women of the zenana are the main seductions of Mara, the tempter, whom philologists prove to be closely connected with Kama, the god of love. The Spirits of the Pure Abode determine that the prince shall see these women in a new light. By a subtle influence they induce him to visit the apartments of the women at the moment that they have put all these women into a sound sleep.

Everything is in disorder—the clothes of the women, their hair, their trinkets. Some are lolling ungracefully on couches, some have hideous faces, some cough, some laugh sillily in their dreams, some rave. Also deformities and blemishes that female art had been careful to conceal are now made prominent by the superior magic of the spirits. This one has a discoloured neck, this one

an ill-formed leg, this one a clumsy fat arm. Smiles have become grins, and fascinations a naked hideousness. Sprawling on couches in ungainly attitudes, all lie amidst their tawdry finery, their silent tambourines and lutes.

“Of a verity I am in a graveyard!” said the prince, in great disgust.

And now comes an incident in his life which is of the highest importance. He has determined to leave the palace altogether. “Then Buddha uncrossed his legs, and turning his eyes towards the eastern horizon, he put aside the precious trellis-work and repaired to the roof of the palace. Then joining the ten fingers of his hands, he thought of all the Buddhas and rendered homage to all the Buddhas, and, looking across the skies, he saw the Master of all the gods, he of the ten hundred eyes [Dasasata Nayana].” Plainly he prayed to Indra. The Romantic Life also retains this incident, but it omits Indra, and makes Buddha pray only to all the Buddhas.

At the moment that Buddha joined his hands in homage towards the eastern horizon, the star Pushya, which had presided at his birth, was

rising. The prince on seeing it said to Chandaka :—

“The benediction that is on me has attained its perfection this very night. Give me at once the king of horses covered with jewels !”

“Guide of men !” said the poor charioteer, “thou knowest the hour and the commands of the king. The great gates are shut !”

But the troops of spirits that were in the air had brought about another marvel. Chandaka looked, and, to his astonishment, the huge portals, that required so many hundred men to stir them, were wide open. Then heavenly songs fell upon his ear :—

“O Chandaka ! thwart not the Guide of men !  
Millions of spirits are singing,  
Drums sound, and sankha-shells,  
And many instruments of music ;  
And yet the city slumbers,  
Around thee is a brightness not of earth !”

Thus exhorted, Chandaka saddles Kantaka, and when the prince has mounted on his back, earth rocks, and the light around is perfectly dazzling. The *genius loci* in saddened tones addresses the

unrivalled horseman as he passes through the Gate of Benediction :—

“Oh, thou who hast the face of a lotus,  
Without thee this city is desolate !  
The prophecy of the Rishis has been made false;  
They said that thou shouldst be a Chakrabala.  
Great Tree of all the Virtues !  
If thou departest thy house will wither,  
Thy race become extinct !”

And then, accompanied by millions of gods and apsaras flinging flowers, Buddha enters upon his divine mission.

A terrible scene took place in the palaces of Kapilavastu when it was discovered that the prince had fled. The king was beside himself. The wives beat their breasts and sobbed ; and called out, some, “Where is our brother ?” and others, “Where is our husband ?” for every one adored the prince.

And when Chandaka with the good horse Kantaka returned the next morning and narrated the flight, a very tender scene took place. Poor Gopa, who since the catastrophe had been more dead than alive, suddenly recovered a little energy and



seized the horse's neck with her shining arms, and remembering the happy hours of the past, she wept and uttered the following:—

“ Two human beings loved one another,

He was my joy.

His face was like the moon, spotless ;

His form was peerless ;

His limbs without a blemish.

He was born of a race pure and without peers ;

He was strong as Narayana, conqueror of many foes.

More compassionate than gods,

He was born in the Lumbini garden, amid the murmuring  
of bees ;

His lips were red as the fruit Bimba,

His teeth were like milk, his skin like gold,

His legs were like the antelope Ena,

His thigh like the trunk of the elephant.

Here are his jewels, but where is he ?

Pearls without him are like the rubble of a demolished  
palace.

Alone on my bed, where he was sleeping by my side, I found  
myself, He had abandoned me !

Kantaka, good horse, whither didst thou take him ?

Chandaka, pitiless, wherefore didst thou not awake me ?

Chandaka fathers and mothers are honoured by all,

Why then should a wife be abandoned ?

Henceforth I feel I cannot eat nor drink ;

My hair shall grow vile and matted ;

An unblest thing is the forcible parting of a man and a  
woman who love.

Tree of knowledge! Guide of men!

Well didst thou say :

In the realms of Change,

In the dominions of Death,

Are no friends!"

Buddha, on leaving the palace, made perhaps the most noteworthy journey ever made by mortal. Every step almost has since been marked by costly marble carvings and shrines and statues under canopy-mounds, which successive generations of pilgrims have smothered in flowers.

To follow in the footsteps of the great teacher was the mystic meaning of these pilgrimages. I think that what is called the Charan symbol, the impress of two of Buddha's feet on an altar, was due, in the first instance, to the pilgrimage idea. In the early carvings we frequently see the worship of these footprints. The symbol is also a well-known one in the lives of Rama, Krishna, etc., and the footprints of Jesus were an important feature in the pilgrimages in Palestine.

Kapilavastu, according to General Cunningham,

is Nagar Khas, and the first ride of Buddha was forty-two miles in the direction of Vaisali. In the morning he reached the Anoma (modern Aumi) River below Sangrampura. At this point the god Indra, disguised as a hunter, induced him to take off his emeralds and silks and put on a hermit's dress. The prince cut off his flowing locks with his own sword. He sent back the charioteer and the good horse Kantaka. Each of these incidents was afterwards commemorated by a chaitya at the spot. They meant, of course, that Buddha's guru, personifying Indra, had made Buddha go through the customary initiation, the tonsure, vows of poverty, etc.

Leaving the Anoma, which is a branch of the modern Raptée, the prince made his first real halt at Vaisali (the modern Besarh), a spot about twenty miles north of Patna. Here he found a number of yogis undergoing their initiation in yoga-vidya, or white magic, in a forest.

The Chinese story gives an interesting picture of these Brahmins. Some were clad in deerskins; some in hempen vesture; some in the rags off corpses. They fed on fruits and herbs and the

sprouting shoots of certain trees. Flowing streams quenched their thirst. They kept cows and calves for their milk, and also for sacrificial purposes. Some practised the more cruel initiations of the Tāpas. Some sat between five fires. Some faced the sun through his daily journey. Some kept their arms above their heads till they withered. Some sat in cemeteries. An unsavory initiation with cow-dung is not omitted in the narration. In the cool shade of the wood were many flowers. As the future Buddha entered it the birds carolled hymns of joy.

In this wood Buddha commenced what the Lalita Vistara calls the "ecstatic meditation on Brahma and his world." But to obtain yoga, or the mystic union with Brahma, the novice must become a servant-pupil of some eminent Adept (Brahmajnani). At Vaisali was a holy man, Arata Kalama, and Buddha said to him, "By thee, O Arata Kalama, must I be initiated into the condition of a seeker of Brahma [Brahmacharin]."

Buddha was by-and-by dissatisfied with his teacher, and he crossed the Ganges and went to

the neighbouring kingdom of Magadha. Running diagonally across this kingdom was a range of hills, abounding in natural caves and mountain ingles and secluded wastes. From Rajagriha, the capital, these stretch in a south-westerly direction as far as Buddha Gaya. These hills and caves were by-and-by profusely sprinkled over with shrines and chaityas, to encase legends which affirmed that Buddha sat cross-legged in this cave and preached on such a hill. Near Rajagriha alone "the number of natural caves," says Fa Hian, the Chinese pilgrim, "is several hundred." The kingdom is now called Bihar, from vihara, a monastery. An Indian would sound "vihara" "Bihar."

And in truth, this range of hills was admirably adapted to be the cradle of a mighty creed. Protected by its rich tropical growth of bush and palmyra palms, the mystic could gather together a band of choice disciples, and train them without molestation. The many natural caves would protect them in winter. In summer the huge banian-tree, the sturdy teak, the mimosa, and the pippala would screen them from the sun, and allow them to

dream on without any other disturbance than the screaming green parrots or the humming bees. Or the ascetic could climb up some of the higher steep. These hills were visited by Hwen Thsang, the intelligent Chinese. This is his description of the hill of the Teacher's Foot (Gurupada). It is, I understand, a little overcharged.

"At this point are seen tall peaks abruptly scarped, valleys and caves without end. Swift torrents race by the hill foot, and enormous forests clothe the valley. Tangles of bush and creeper make shade for the caverns. Above, shining through the mists, and touching heaven itself, are three bold peaks."

On this steep Kasyapa obtained Nirvana. Another high mountain, the Vulture's Peak (Gridhrakuta), was also visited by the pilgrim. It is said to be crowned with the pearl mani; and, indeed, the lustre of this imaginary gem seems to have attracted him all the way from China. Buddha himself loved this mountain, and a large statue of him, in the act of preaching, was seen by the Chinamen far up in the mists. The White Lotus of Dharma, the most mystical

of the Buddhist Sutras, was here delivered. The hill is an isolated hill to the south of Rajagriha. It is of prodigious height, presenting the appearance of a tall tower, round which the vultures fly. "The blue tints of heaven are seen on it, pale tints and dark tints." The pilgrim also visited a cavern where Buddha sat cross-legged and dreamed. The Lalita Vistara announces that he had a teacher called Rudraka, when in this neighbourhood. The "Twelve Acts of Sakya" tells us that he "visited several hermits living in the hills."

"Be ye a light unto yourselves!" this is the motto of the Higher Buddhism. By-and-by Buddha forsook his various teachers, and trusted alone to his own inspiration. It is impossible to gauge the amount of happiness that this decision has brought to the human race. At Buddha Gaya, by the tranquil Nairanjana, Buddha plunged into a tangled thicket—plunged into solitude.

All who know the green jangals of Bengal and the rich tropical growth on the low red hills, can picture the scene. I can imagine the cactus-like euphorbias, the tangle of climbing ferns and

clinging creepers, the parasite fig, and the convolvulus, that bespatter with their large flowers the dark trunk of the great teak-tree, or strangle the *Asoka* *Jonesia* with a network of twigs. Here and there flash out the bright broad leaves of the plantain; or the white stem of the tall palm carries skyward its leafy crown. Bamboos shoot up aloft a flight of green rockets. Here is the mimosa and the champak. To the left is a forest growing from one stem, for the great Indian fig has the faculty of sending down innumerable roots from many great branches, which grow and grow until acre after acre is screened by its dark green leaves. Here is the crooked stem of the pandanus, forked like a candelabrum, each bough carrying a bunch of leaves twisted into a screw, whilst the base of the trunk rests as if on stilts on a number of air roots. Flowers of every conceivable tint are plundered by butterflies of every conceivable hue. Green jays scream, and other birds, blue, red, and orange, quiver on the boughs. Snakes and lizards sparkle in the grass. The little yellow and green squirrels are untiring. And I can imagine, for I have seen such when campaigning in a neigh-



bouring district, the miraculous coruscation of fireflies round the bushes that fringe the river, in the hush of a warm evening in the rains, when the amazing blaze of cadmium and vermilion that makes a Bengal sunset a thing apart has toned down to a cold russet. In that jangal Buddha sat cross-legged under the pippala (*Ficus religiosa*), which has become the most celebrated tree in the world.

As the traveller approaches Buddha Gaya he sees a mighty red tower erect amid the ruins of the palaces and temples around. As in the day of Hwen Thsang, the Chinese pilgrim, this tall tower stands sentry over the famous tree. Pilgrims in hundreds of thousands still visit it yearly. Under that tree Buddha thought out a religion that was for the whole world, and not for a caste or tribe like the old creed of India; a religion, not of state ceremonial and the slaughter of unoffending animals, but of the spiritualising of the individual. Under that tree Buddha invented the preacher and the missionary.

And now what did Buddha teach?

At this point we are met with a difficulty, for

our Oxford professors tell us that without a complete and accurate knowledge of Sanskrit it is hopeless to study an Indian religion.

"The religion of Buddha," says Professor Max Müller in his "Chips from a German Workshop," "was made for a madhouse."

"Buddha," says Sir Monier Williams in his "Buddhism," "altogether ignored in human nature any spiritual aspirations."

Having heard the dictum of Oxford, perhaps it is fair to listen to a real Buddhist. In a work called "Happiness," an anonymous writer sketches his religion.

The teaching of Buddha, as set forth by him, is simple and sublime. There are two states of the soul, call them ego and non-ego—the plane of matter and the plane of spirit—what you will. As long as we live for the ego and its greedy joys we are feverish, restless, miserable. Happiness consists in the destruction of the ego, by the Bodhi, the Gnosis. This is that interior knowledge, that high state of the soul, attained by Fenelon and Wesley, by Mirza the Sufi and Swedenborg, by Spinoza and Amiel.

"The kingdom of God is within you," says Christ.

"In whom are hid all the treasures of *sophia* and *gnosis*," says St. Paul.

"The enlightened view both worlds," says Mirza the Sufi, "but the bat flieth about in the darkness without seeing."

"Who speaks and acts with the inner quickening," says Buddha, "has joy for his accompanying shadow. Who speaks and acts without the inner quickening, him sorrow pursues as the chariot wheel the horse."

✓ Let us give here a pretty parable, and let Buddha speak for himself:—

"Once upon a time there was a man born blind, and he said, 'I cannot believe in a world of appearances. Colours bright or sombre exist not. There is no sun, no moon, no stars. None have witnessed such things.' His friends chid him; but he still repeated the same words.

"In those days there was a Rishi who had the inner vision; and he detected on the steep slopes of the lofty Himalayas four simples that had the power to cure the man who was born blind. He culled

them, and mashing them with his teeth applied them. Instantly the man who was born blind cried out, 'I see colours and appearances. I see beautiful trees and flowers. I see the bright sun. No one ever saw like this before.'

"Then certain holy men came to the man who was born blind, and said to him, 'You are vain and arrogant and nearly as blind as you were before. You see the outside of things, not the inside. One whose supernatural senses are quickened sees the lapis-lazuli fields of the Buddhas of the Past, and hears heavenly conch shells sounded at a distance of five yoganās. Go off to a desert, a forest, a cavern in the mountains, and conquer this mean thirst of earthly things.'"

The man who was born blind obeyed; and the parable ends with its obvious interpretation. Buddha is the old Rishi and the four simples are the four great truths. He weans mankind from the lower life and opens the eyes of the blind.

There are two great schools of Buddhism, and they are quite agreed on this point that Buddhism is the quickening of the spiritual vision.

Let us now consider how the two great schools of Buddhism diverge.

1. The earliest school, the Buddhism of Buddha, taught that after Nirvana, or man's emancipation from re-birth, the consciousness of the individual survived, and that he dwelt for ever in happiness in the Brahma heavens. This is the Buddhism of the "Little Vehicle."

2. The second or innovating school maintained that after Nirvana the consciousness of the individual ceased. Their creed was the blank atheism of the Brahmin Sunyavadi.

The first serious study of Buddhism took place in one of our colonies, and the first students were missionaries. Great praise is due to the missionaries of Ceylon for their early scholarship, but naturally they ransacked the Buddhist books less as scholars than missionaries. Soon they discovered with delight the teaching of the atheistic school, and statements that the Ceylon scriptures were the earliest authentic Buddhist scriptures, brought to the island by Mahinda, King Asoka's son (B.C. 306). In consequence of this the missionaries concluded that Ceylon had preserved

untainted the original teaching of Buddha, and that the earliest school, that of the "Little Vehicle," was atheistic.

But the leading Sanskrit scholar of the world, Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra, has completely dissipated this idea. In his work, "Nepalese Buddhist Literature," p. 178, he shows conclusively that it is the Buddhism of the innovating school, that of the "Great Vehicle," which preaches atheism and annihilation. He gives a digest of one of the chief "Great Vehicle" books, the "Satasahasrika," in which a Sunyavadi maintains his doctrine of nothingness against all comers, through one hundred thousand verses. He gives a digest also of another book, the "Raksha Bhagavati," where the nihilism of the "Great Vehicle" is also paraded, in language servilely borrowed, so Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra tells us, from the Brahmin Sunyavadi. These two books are set down as "Great Vehicle" books in the official catalogue drawn up for the India office from the Chinese by the Japanese scholar, Bunyiu Nanjio.

Why Sir Monier Williams ignores all this I cannot conceive, Hwen Thsang, a Chinese monk

who visited India in the seventh century, tells the same story. I must refer the reader to my "Popular Life of Buddha" for details. Hwen Thsang announces in brief that the Buddhism of the "Great Vehicle" was introduced by King Kaniska (about A.D. 10) and that the genuine Buddhists complained that it was stolen from the followers of Siva, and had nothing to do with Buddha at all. They nicknamed it the "Vehicle of Sunya," that is, the doctrine of the Sunya vadi.

I think that Sir Monier Williams's fancy, that Buddha ignored the spiritual side of humanity, is due to the fact that by the word "knowledge" he conceives the Buddhist to mean knowledge of material facts. That Buddha's conceptions are nearer to the ideas of Swedenborg than of Mill is, I think, proved by the Çingalese book, the Samanna Phala Sutta. Buddha details, at considerable length, the practices of the ascetic, and then enlarges upon their exact object. Man has a body composed of the four elements. It is the fruit of the union of his father and mother. It is nourished on rice and gruel, and may be truncated, crushed, destroyed. In this transitory body his

intelligence is enchained. The ascetic finding himself thus confined, directs his mind to the creation of a freer integument. He represents to himself in thought another body created from this material body—a body with a form, members, and organs. This body, in relation to the material body, is like the sword and the scabbard, or a serpent issuing from a basket in which it is confined. The ascetic, then, purified and perfected, commences to practise supernatural faculties. He finds himself able to pass through material obstacles, walls, ramparts, etc.; he is able to throw his phantasmal appearance into many places at once; he is able to walk upon the surface of water without immersing himself; he can fly through the air like a falcon furnished with large wings! he can leave this world and reach even the heaven of Brahma himself.

. Another faculty is now covered by his force of will, as the fashioner of ivory shapes the tusk of the elephant according to his fancy. He acquires the power of hearing the sounds of the unseen world as distinctly as those of the phenomenal world—more distinctly, in point of fact. Also by



the power of Manas he is able to read the most secret thoughts of others, and to tell their characters. He is able to say, "There is a mind that is governed by passion. There is a mind that is enfranchised. This man has noble ends in view. This man has no ends in view." As a child sees his earrings reflected in the water, and says, "Those are my earrings," so the purified ascetic recognizes the truth. Then comes to him the faculty of "divine vision," and he sees all that men do on earth and after they die, and when they are again re-born. Then he detects the secrets of the universe, and why men are unhappy, and how they may cease to be so.

The Lotus tells us that "at the moment of death thousands of Buddhas show their faces to the virtuous man." This clairvoyance of Buddhism seems very like the "discerning of spirits" recorded by St. Paul. Professor Beal shows that the aureole, adopted afterwards for saints in the Christian religion, proceeded from an idea of the Buddhists that the ascetic after practising *tapas* was supposed to be furnished with an actual coruscation on his head.

I will now quote a conversation between Buddha and some Brahmins which I think throws much light on his teaching. It is given in another Cingalese book, the "Tevigga Sutta."

When the teacher was dwelling at Manasakata in the mango grove, some Brahmins, learned in the three Vedas, come to consult him on the question of union with the eternal Brahma. They ask if they are in the right pathway towards that union. Buddha replies at great length. He suggests an ideal case. He supposes that a man has fallen in love with the "most beautiful woman in the land." Day and night he dreams of her, but has never seen her. He does not know whether she is tall or short, of Brahmin or Sudra caste, of dark or fair complexion; he does not even know her name. The Brahmins are asked if the talk of that man about that woman be wise or foolish. They confess that it is "foolish talk." Buddha then applies the same train of reasoning to them. The Brahmins versed in the three Vedas are made to confess that they have never seen Brahma, that they do not know whether he is tall or short, or anything about him, and that

all their talk about union with him is also foolish talk. They are mounting a crooked staircase, and do not know whether it leads to a mansion or a precipice. They are standing on the bank of a river and calling to the other bank to come to them.

Now it seems to me that if Buddha were the uncompromising teacher of atheism that Sir Monier Williams pictures him, he has at this point an admirable opportunity of urging his views. The Brahmins, he would of course contend, knew nothing about Brahma, for the simple reason that no such being as Brahma exists.

But this is exactly the line that Buddha does not take. His argument is that the Brahmins knew nothing of Brahma, because Brahma is purely spiritual, and they are purely materialistic.

Five "Veils," he shows, hide Brahma from mortal ken. These are—

1. The Veil of Lustful Desire.
2. The Veil of Malice.
3. The Veil of Sloth and Idleness.
4. The Veil of Pride and Self-righteousness.
5. The Veil of Doubt.

Buddha then goes on with his questionings :

“Is Brahma in possession of wives and wealth?”

“He is not, Gautama!” answers Vasetttha the Brahmin.

“Is his mind full of anger, or free from anger?”

“Free from anger, Gautama!”

“Is his mind full of malice, or free from malice?”

“Free from malice, Gautama!”

“Is his mind depraved or pure?”

“It is pure, Gautama!”

“Has he self-mastery, or has he not?”

“He has, Gautama.”

The Brahmins are then questioned about themselves.

“Are the Brahmins versed in the three Vedas in possession of wives and wealth, or are they not?”

“They are, Gautama!”

“Have they anger in their hearts, or have they not?”

“They have, Gautama.”

“Do they bear malice, or do they not?”

“ They do, Gautama.”

“ Are they pure in heart, or are they not ?”

“ They are not, Gautama.”

“ Have they self-mastery, or have they not ?”

“ They have not, Gautama.”

These replies provoke, of course, the very obvious retort that no point of union can be found between such dissimilar entities. Brahma is free from malice, sinless, self-contained, so, of course, it is only the sinless that can hope to be in harmony with him.

Vasettha then puts this question: “ It has been told me, Gautama, that Sramana Gautama knows the way to the state of union with Brahma ?”

“ Brahma I know, Vasettha !” says Buddha in reply, “ and the world of Brahma, and the path leading to it !”

The humbled Brahmins learned in the three Vedas then ask Buddha to “ show them the way to a state of union with Brahma.”

Buddha replies at considerable length, drawing a sharp contrast between the lower Brahminism and the higher Brahminism, the “ householder ” and the “ houseless one.” The householder

Brahmins are gross, sensual, avaricious, insincere. They practise for lucre black magic, fortune-telling, cozenage. They gain the ear of kings, breed wars, predict victories, sacrifice life, spoil the poor. As a foil to this he paints the recluse, who has renounced all worldly things, and is pure, self-possessed, happy.

To teach this "higher life," a Buddha "from time to time is born into the world, blessed and worthy, abounding in wisdom, a guide to erring mortals." He sees the universe face to face, the spirit world of Brahma and that of Mara the tempter. He makes his knowledge known to others. The houseless one, instructed by him, "lets his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of pity, sympathy, and equanimity; and so the second, and so the third, and so the fourth. And thus the whole wide world, above, below, around, and everywhere, does he continue to pervade with heart of pity, sympathy, and equanimity, far-reaching, grown great, and beyond measure."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Buddhist Suttas," p. 201.

“Verily this, Vasettha, is the way to a state of union with Brahma,” and he proceeds to announce that the Bhikshu, or Buddhist beggar, “who is free from anger, free from malice, pure in mind, master of himself, will, after death, when the body is dissolved, become united with Brahma.” The Brahmins at once see the full force of this teaching. It is as a conservative in their eyes that Buddha figures, and not an innovator. He takes the side of the ancient spiritual religion of the country against rapacious innovators.

Sir Monier Williams quotes a part of this Sutta, and, oddly enough, still maintains that Buddha was an Atheist.

Let us now write down some of the sayings of the Great Teacher.

“By love alone can we conquer wrath. By good alone can we conquer evil. The whole world dreads violence. All men tremble in the presence of death. Do to others that which ye would have them do to you. Kill not. Cause no death.”

“Say no harsh words to thy neighbour. He will reply to thee in the same tone.”

“‘I am injured and provoked, I have been beaten and plundered!’ They who speak thus will never cease to hate.”

“That which can cause hate to cease in the world is not hate, but the absence of hate.”

“If, like a trumpet trodden on in battle, thou complainest not, thou hast obtained Nirvana.”

“Silently shall I endure abuse, as a war-elephant receives the shaft of the bowman.”

“The awakened man goes not on revenge, but rewards with kindness the very being who has injured him, as the sandal-tree scents the axe of the woodman who fells it.”

“The swans go on the path of the sun. They go through the air by means of their miraculous power. The wise are led out of this world when they have conquered Mara and his train.”

“A man is not a Sramana by outward acts.”

“Not by tonsure does an undisciplined man become a Sramana.”

“There is no satisfying of lusts with a shower of gold pieces.”

“A man is not a Bhikshu simply because he asks others for alms. A man is not a Muni because



he observes silence. Not by discipline and vows, not by much spiritual knowledge, not by sleeping alone, not by the gift of holy inspiration, can I earn that release which no worldling can know. The real Sramana is he who has quieted all evil."

"If one man conquer in battle a thousand thousand men, and another conquer himself, the last is the greatest conqueror."

"Few are there amongst men who arrive at the other shore. Many run up and down the shore."

"Let the fool wish for a false reputation, for precedence amongst the Bhikshus, for lordship in the convents, for worship amongst other people."

"A supernatural person is not easily found. He is not born everywhere. Wherever such a sage is born that race prospers."

"Religion is nothing but the faculty of love."

"The house of Brahma is that wherein children obey their parents."

"The elephant's cub, if he find not leafless and thorny creepers in the greenwood, becomes thin."

"Beauty and riches are like a knife smeared with honey. The child sucks and is wounded."

## THE ONE THING NEEDFUL.

Certain subtle questions were proposed to Buddha, such as: What will best conquer the evil passions of man? What is the most savory gift for the alms-bowl of the mendicant? Where is true happiness to be found? Buddha replied to them all with one word, *Dharma* (the heavenly life).

I will now give some of the Buddhist parables, some almost unequalled for beauty.

## THE PARABLE OF THE FORGIVENESS OF INJURIES.

In a previous existence, Buddha was once the ascetic Jin Juh, and he dwelt in a forest. "Forests are delightful," he subsequently declared. "Where the worldling finds no delight, there the awakened man will find delight." At this time there was a king called Ko Li, who was possessed of a cruel and wicked disposition. One day, taking his women with him, he entered the forest to hunt, and becoming tired, he lay down to sleep. Then all the women went into the woods to gather flowers, and they came to the cell of the

ascetic Jin Juh, and listened to his teaching. After some time the king awoke, and having missed the women, he became jealous, and drew his sword, and went in search of them. Seeing them all standing in front of the cell of the ascetic, he became very angry indeed.

"Who are you?" he said.

"I am the ascetic Jin Juh!"

"Have you conquered all earthly passions?" pursued the king.

The ascetic replied that he was there to struggle with passion.

"If you have not attained Sheung te teng," said the king, "I do not see that you are better than the philosophers [Fan fuh];" and with the cruelty of an Eastern tyrant, he hacked off the hands and feet of the poor hermit.

Perceiving a majestic calm still upon the face of the tortured ascetic, the astonished monarch asked him if he felt no anger.

"None, king, and I will one day teach thee also to curb thy wild-beast passions. When, in another existence, I attain Sheung te teng [Nirvana], thou, O king, shalt be my first convert."

In a subsequent existence King Ko Li became the disciple Kaundiliya.

### THE PARABLE OF THE ATHEIST

Angati, a king in Tirhut, had a daughter, Ruchi. At first he lived piously, but one day he heard some false teachers who declared that there is no future world, and that man, after death, is resolved into water and the other elements. After this he thought it was better to enjoy the present moment, and he became cruel.

One day Ruchi went to the king and requested him to give her one thousand gold pieces, as the next day was a festival and she wished to make an offering. The king replied that there was no future world, no reward for merit; religious rites were useless, and it was better to enjoy herself in the present world.

Now Ruchi possessed the inner vision, and was able to trace back her life through fourteen previous existences. She told the king that she had once been a nobleman, but an adulterer, and as a punishment she was now only a woman. As

a farther punishment she had been a monkey, a bullock, a goat, and had been once born into the hell Avichi. The king, unwilling to be taught by a woman, continued to be a sceptic. Ruchi then, by the power of an incantation, summoned a spirit to her aid, and Buddha himself, in the form of an ascetic, arrived at the city.. The king asked him from whence he came. The ascetic replied that he came from the other world. "The king, in answer, laughingly said—

"If you have come from the other world, lend me one hundred gold pieces, and when I go to that world I will give you a thousand."

Buddha answered gravely—

"When any one lends money, it must be to the rich. If he bestow money on the poor, it is a gift, for the poor cannot repay. I cannot lend you, therefore, one hundred gold pieces, for you are poor and destitute."

"You utter an untruth," said the king, angrily. "Does not this rich city belong to me?"

The Buddha replied—

"In a short time, O king, you will die. Can you take your wealth with you to hell? There you

will be in unspeakable misery, without raiment, without food. How, then, can you pay me my debt?"

At this moment, on the face of Buddha was a strange light which dazzled the king.

### BUDDHA'S PARABLE OF KISOGOTAMI.

In the Savatthi country was a rich man with four hundred millions. One day all the wealth in his house turned into charcoal. The rich man took to his bed, and refused food. A friend visiting him, was told what had happened. The friend said, "All your wealth has turned into charcoal because whilst in your possession it was no better than charcoal. You hoarded it up, and gave none in alms. Will you take my advice?" The rich man promised so to do. "Then," said the friend, "spread mats in the bazaar, and pile up upon them all this charcoal, and pretend to be trafficking with it. Your neighbours, seeing the heap, will say, 'O rich man, every one else sells cloth, oil, honey; why do you sell charcoal?' Reply to them, 'I am selling my goods!' By the maya of the devas, your money to the grosser

mortals appears no better than charcoal; but if any one with the inner sense should visit the bazaar, to him or her it will appear like good gold.”

The rich man spread some mats in the bazaar, and piled on them the money that had turned to charcoal. The neighbours said, “Why does he sell charcoal?”

At length a young girl named Kisogotami, an orphan, and miserably poor, approached the heap. “My lord, rich man,” she said, “why do you thus pile up gold and silver for sale?”

The rich man said, “Madam, give me that gold and silver!” The girl took up a handful of the charcoal, and lo! it became gold once more. The rich man married her to his only son. He had argued thus in his mind: “With many gold is no better than charcoal; but with Kisogotami charcoal becomes pure gold.”

In four years’ time Kisogotami lost her only son. In her love for it she carried the dead child clasped to her bosom, and went about asking the neighbours to give her some medicine for it. They said, “Is she mad? The boy is dead.”

At length a wise man said to her, "I cannot give you medicine for your child, but I know a doctor who can."

The girl said, "If so, tell me who it is."

He answered, "Go to Sakya Muni, the Buddha!"

Kisogotami repaired to the cell of Buddha, and accosted him. "Lord and master, do you know of any medicine that will cure my boy?"

Buddha answered, "I want a handful of mustard-seed."

The girl promised to procure it; but Buddha added, "I require some mustard-seed taken from a house where no son, husband, parent, or slave has died."

Poor Kisogotami, with the dead child carried astride of her hip in the Indian fashion, went from house to house. The compassionate people said, "Here is mustard-seed, take it!" But when she asked if any son, or husband, or parent, or slave had died in that house, she received for a reply, "Lady, the living are few, the dead are many; death comes to every house!" At last, weary and hopeless, Kisogotami sat down by the wayside,



and watched the lamps of the city being extinguished one by one. At this instant, Buddha, by the power of Siddhi, placed his phantasm before her, which said to her, "All living beings resemble those lamps. They are lit up and flicker for awhile, and then dark night reigns over all." The appearance then preached the law to her, and, in the words of the Chinese, he provided "salvation and refuge, pointing out the path that leads to the eternal city."

### THE STORY OF PRINCE KUNALA.

King Asoka had an infant boy whose eyes were so beautiful that his father called him Kunala. There is a bird of this name that dwells amongst the rhododendrons and pines of the Himalayas. It is famed for its lovely eyes. The young prince grew up. His beauty was the talk of the king's dominions. No woman could gaze into his eyes without falling in love with him. A Buddhist Sthavira (lit. old man) spoke serious words to him one day: "The pride of the eye, my son, is vanity! Beware!"

At an early age Kunala married a young girl, named Kanchana. One day a royal lady saw the young husband, and fell desperately in love with his fine eyes. Kunala was horrorstruck at this.

"Are you not?" he said, "in the zenana of the king, my father?" This speech changed her love to a bitter hate.

At this time the city of Taxila revolted against King Asoka. The monarch desired to hasten thither, but his ministers counselled him to send Prince Kunala in his place. The prince repaired to the revolted city and soon restored quiet. The people assured him that it was the exactions and oppressions of the king's officers that they had resisted, not the king himself.

Soon the king became afflicted with a revolting malady, and wanted to abdicate in favour of his son. The Queen Tishya Rakshita, she who hated the prince, thought in her heart, "If Kunala mounts the throne, I am lost!" She ordered her slaves to bring her a man afflicted with the same malady as the king. She poisoned this man and had his inside examined. A huge worm was feeding upon it. She fed this worm with pepper and

with ginger. The worm was none the worse. She fed it with onion, it died.

Immediately she repaired to the king and promised to cure him if he would grant her a boon. The king promised to grant her anything she asked him. She said to him, "Take this onion and you will be well."

"Queen," said the king, "I am a Kshatriya, and the laws of Manu forbid me to eat onion." The queen told him it was medicine, not food. He ate the onion and was cured.

The boon demanded by the queen as a recompense for this great cure was a week's rule of the king's dominions. The king hesitated, but was over-persuaded. Immediately the queen sent an order sealed with the royal seal that Prince Kunala should be forced to wear the garments of a beggar and have both his eyes put out. A blind prince cannot mount the throne.

The good folks of Taxila were thunderstruck at this command, but they said to each other, "If the king is so merciless to his son, what will he be to us if we disobey him!" Some low-caste Chandalas were summoned; they loved the prince,

and would not execute the cruel order. At last a hideous object, a man deformed and stained with eighteen unsightly marks, came forward and tore out the prince's eyes. Soon he found himself a beggar on the high-road. His wife, Kanchana, also clad in rags, was by his side. The poor prince now remembered the solemn words of the Sthavira.

"The outside world," he said to his wife, "is it not a mere globe of flesh?"

The prince had always been sickly, and to support himself now he played upon an instrument called the vina. After many wanderings they reached Palibothra (Patna), and approached the palace of the king; but the guards, seeing two dirty beggars, thrust them out summarily.

By-and-by the king heard the sound of the vina.

"It is my son," he said. He sent out officers of the court to bring him in. His condition filled the king with amazement. When he understood what had happened he summoned the guilty queen to his presence and ordered her to be burnt alive.

But the Prince Kunala was now a changed man. When he felt himself deserted, as he thought, by his earthly father, he had become a "son of Buddha." His "eye of flesh" had been put out, but he felt that the spiritual vision had been for the first time awakened. In lieu of the soft clothes of Kasi, he now wore the rags of one of Buddha's sublime beggars. He threw himself at the feet of his father, and pleaded for the queen's life: "I feel no anger, no pain, only gratitude. Kill her not."

Asoka, the powerful king, was destined to rule India with a sway more extensive than that of the proudest Mogul. He was destined also to abandon his luxurious palaces, and himself wander along the highway begging his food. He, too, became a Bhikshu.

#### A BUDDHA AT A MARRIAGE FEAST.

King Sudarsana was a model king. In his dominions was no killing or whipping as punishment; no soldiers' weapons to torture or destroy. His city, Jambunada, was built of crystal and cornelian, and silver and yellow gold. A Buddha visited it one day.

Now in that city was a man who was the next day to be married, and he much wished the Buddha to come to the feast. Buddha, passing by, read his silent wish, and consented to come. The bridegroom was overjoyed, and scattered many flowers over his house and sprinkled it with perfumes.

The next day Buddha with his alms-bowl in his hand and with a retinue of many followers arrived; and when they had taken their seats in due order, the host distributed every kind of exquisite food, saying, "Eat, my lord, and all the congregation, according to your desire."

But now a marvel presented itself to the astonished mind of the host. Although all these holy men ate very heartily, the meats and the drinks remained positively quite undiminished; whereupon he argued in his mind, "If I could only invite all my kinsmen to come, the banquet would be sufficient for them likewise."

And now another marvel was presented. Buddha read the good man's thought, and all the relatives without invitation streamed in at the door. They, also, fed heartily on the miraculous

food. It is almost needless to add that the Chinese book "Fu-pen-hing-tsi-king" (as translated by the invaluable Mr. Beal) announces that all these guests, having heard a few apposite remarks on Dharma from the lips of the Tathagata, to the satisfaction of everybody (excepting, perhaps, the poor bride), donned the yellow robes.

The next parable is a very pretty one, and shows that a love that can pierce the limits of this narrow world and range amongst the Devalokas of the hereafter could be conceived even in the age of Sakya Muni.

#### THE STORY OF THE GIRL BHADRA.

When Sakya Muni was in a previous existence, a certain King Suryapati invited the great Buddha Dipankara to visit his dominions: and to do him honour he issued an edict that all his subjects within a radius of twelve yoganās from his chief city should reserve all flowers and perfume for the king and his offerings to the Buddha. No one was to be in possession of these offerings on his own account.

Sakya was at this time a young Brahmin named Megha. He was well versed in the law, although he was only sixteen years of age. He was incomparable in appearance; his body like yellow gold and his hair the same. His voice was as soft and sweet as the voice of Brahmā. He happened to reach the city at the very moment that it was adorned in expectation of the coming of the Buddha Dipankara, and having already vague yearnings after the Buddhaship in his breast, he determined to make an offering to the incarnate Buddha.

He reasoned thus in his heart: "What offering shall I make to him? Buddhas condemn offerings of money; I will purchase the most beautiful flower I can find."

He went to a hairdresser's shop and selected a lovely flower, but the hairdresser refused to sell it. "The king has given orders, respectable youth, that no chaplets of flowers in this city are on any account to be sold!" Megha went off to a second and then to a third hairdresser's shop, and was met everywhere with the same refusal."



Now, it happened that as he was pursuing his search he saw a dark-clad water-girl, whose name was Bhadra, secretly take a seven-stalked Utpala flower and put it inside her water-pitcher, and then go on her way. Megha went up to her and accosted her. "What are you going to do with that Utpala flower which I saw you put into your pitcher? I will give you five hundred gold pieces for it if you will sell it to me."

The young girl was arrested by the novel appearance of the handsome young man. She answered presently, "Beautiful youth, have you not heard that the great Dipankara Buddha is now about to enter the city in consequence of the king's invitation, and the king has issued orders that whatsoever scented unguents or flowers there are within twelve yoganas of the city are not on any account to be sold to any private individual, as the king will buy them all up for the purpose of presenting them to the Buddha. Now, in our neighbourhood there is a certain hairdresser's wife, who privately took from me five hundred pieces of money and gave me in return this seven-stalked flower; and the reason why I have thus transgressed the edict

of the king is that I want myself to make an offering to the holy man."

Then Megha answered, "My good girl, what you have said will justify you in taking my five hundred gold pieces, and in giving me five stalks of the Utpala flower and reserving two for yourself."

She answered, "What will you do with the flowers if I give them to you?"

The young Brahmin told her that he wished to offer them to Buddha.

Now, it happened that this young girl was gifted with the inner vision, and she knew from the youth's remarkable appearance that he was destined one day to become the guide of men. She said; "Fair stranger, one day you will be a great Buddha, and if you will promise me that, up to the day of your Buddhahood, at each new birth you will take me as your wife, and that when you attain Nirvana you will let me follow you as a disciple in your retinue of followers, then will I give you five stalks of this Utpala flower."

The Brahmin replied that an ascetic was required to give all his wealth to his fellow-men, and that if she consented to such an arrangement

He was willing to contract that she should ever be his wife. She sold to him five stalks of the Utpala flower, that they might be his own special gift to the Buddha, and she desired him to present the other two stalks as her own free gift.

When Dipankara approached, majestic, and with a countenance like a glassy lake, the offering was thrown to him, and by a miracle the flowers remained in mid air, forming a canopy over his head.

Amongst the "Fan heavens" of the Chinese is one called Fuh-ngai (happy love). Let us hope that in that heaven the pretty Bhikshu Bhadra is still near her favourite teacher.

#### KING WESSANTARA.

Buddha once lived on earth as King Wessantara. So kind was he to everybody that it was rumoured that he had made a resolution to give to everybody whatever he was asked. He had a loving wife and two children. He had also an enchanted white elephant.

A grievous famine burst out in a neighbouring

kingdom, and the poor died by thousands. Eight Brahmins were sent to King Wessantara to ask him for the white elephant; for fertile rain always falls in countries where an enchanted white elephant is staying. The benign king gave up his white elephant. This so incensed his own people that they deposed him. •

Wessantara gave all his wealth to the poor, and departed in a carriage drawn by two horses, intending to repair to an immense rock in the wilderness, and there become a hermit. On his way he met two poor Brahmins, who asked him for his carriage. He complied, and the deposed king and queen, each carrying a child, made the rest of the journey on foot. Their road lay through the kingdom of the queen's father, who sought to overcome their resolution, but in vain.

Meanwhile a Brahmin named Jutaka was living very happily with a beautiful wife, until one day some envious neighbours poisoned her mind as she was drawing water at a well. They persuaded her she was a slave, and so incensed her that she attacked her husband and beat him and pulled his beard. Moreover, she threatened to leave his

house unless he procured for her two slaves. A foolish king, she said, named Wessantara was dwelling as a hermit in the wilderness ; let him go there and ask for two slaves. He had two children, and had made a vow to refuse no one any demand.

Jutaka departed, but found all access to the royal hermit denied by a hunter placed there by the queen's father, who, knowing Wessantara's vow, had desired to screen him from the further importunities of the greedy. Jutaka told him a lying tale and contrived to reach the hermit. He demanded the two children as slaves, and Wessantara was bound by his oath to hand them over to him. Jutaka, as soon as he was out of sight of the king, bound the royal children firmly with cords ; but missing his way in the wilderness, came by chance to the territory of the queen's father, who was quickly apprised of all that had occurred.

He summoned the Brahmin before him, and offered him in exchange for the grandchildren the weight of them in gold pieces. The greedy Brahmin's end was not unlike that of Judas, for

with his ill-gotten wealth he made a great feast, and from repletion his bowels also gushed out.

#### KING BAMBADAT.

Buddha was in one of his births a merchant of Benares, and as he was one day passing with his wife in a carriage through the streets of Rajagriha, the capital of King Bambadat, the monarch saw his wife and became captivated with her unrivalled beauty.

Immediately he hatched an infamous plot to gain her. He sent one of his officers to drop furtively a jewel of great value in the merchant's carriage. The poor merchant was then arrested on the charge of stealing the royal gem. He and his beautiful wife were brought before the king, who listened to the evidence with mock attention, and then ordered the merchant to be executed and his wife to be detained in the royal harem. King Bambadat was a cruel monarch, whose oppressions had earned him the hatred of his subjects.

The poor merchant was led away to be decapitated, but Indra on his throne in heaven had witnessed the atrocious transaction; and, lo! a miracle was accomplished. As the executioner raised his sword, the king, who was watching the bloody event, was suddenly made to change places with the merchant by the agency of unseen hands, and he received the fatal blow; whilst Buddha suddenly found himself exalted on the royal elephant that had brought the king to the spot. This striking interposition of Heaven awed the assembled populace, and they proclaimed the merchant their new king. It is needless to add that his rule formed a striking contrast to that of King Bambadat. It is not mentioned, but I think it is very plain also, that the beautiful wife was the girl Bhadra of the former story. Buddhism has done much evil by its sacerdotal celibacy, but, on the other hand, it seems to have had the honour of first conceiving a love of man with woman that could pierce the skies and be prolonged after death.

## THE HUNGRY DOG.

There was once a wicked king named Usuratanam, who oppressed his people so much that Buddha from the sky took compassion upon them. At this time he was the god Indra, and assuming the form of a huntsman, he came down to earth with the Deva Matali, disguised as a dog of enormous size. They at once entered the palace of the king, and the dog barked so wofully that the sound seemed to shake the royal buildings to their very foundations. The king, affrighted, had the hunter brought before him; and he enquired the portent of these terrible sounds.

“It is through hunger that the dog barks,” said the huntsman, and again a sound louder far than thunder reverberated through the palace.

“Fetch him food! Fetch anything!” cried the king in terror. All the food that happened then to be prepared was the royal banquet. It was placed before the dog. He ate it with surprising rapidity, and then barked once more with his



terrible voice. More food was sent for, the food stored up in the city, the food of the adjacent provinces, but still the insatiable dog after a brief interval ate all up and barked for more. The king could scarcely prevent himself from falling to the earth with terror.

"Will nothing ever satisfy your dog, O hunter?"

"Nothing, O king, but the flesh of all his enemies."

"And who are his enemies, O hunter?"

"His enemies," said the hunter, "are those who do wicked deeds, who oppress the poor, who make war, who are cruel to the brute creation."

The king, remembering his many evil deeds, was seized with terror and remorse; and the Buddha, revealing himself, preached the law of righteousness to him and his people. It is plain that in the original story, as in the last, Indra alone was the supernatural agent, and the clumsy introduction of Buddha is an after-thought. Matali is the conventional charioteer of Indra, which I think is an additional proof.

## BUDDHA AS A PEACEMAKER.

It is recorded that two princes were once about to engage in a terrible battle in a quarrel that took place about a certain embankment constructed to keep in water. Between these kings and their assembled armies, Buddha suddenly appeared and asked the cause of the strife. When he was completely informed upon the subject, he put the following questions:—

“Tell me, O kings! is earth of any intrinsic value?”

“Of no value whatever,” was the reply.

“Is water of any intrinsic value?”

“Of no value whatever!”

“And the blood of kings, is that of any intrinsic value?”

“Its value is priceless!”

“Is it reasonable,” asked the Tathagata, “that that which is priceless should be staked against that which has no value whatever?”

The incensed monarchs saw the wisdom of this reasoning and abandoned their dispute.

## THE PRODIGAL SON.

A certain man had a son who went away into a far country. There he became miserably poor. The father, however, grew rich, and accumulated much gold and treasure, and many storehouses and elephants. But he tenderly loved his lost son, and secretly lamented that he had no one to whom to leave his palaces and suvernas at his death.

After many years the poor man, in search of food and clothing, happened to come to the country where his father had great possessions. And when he was afar off his father saw him, and reflected thus in his mind: "If I at once acknowledge my son and give to him my gold and my treasures, I shall do him a great injury. He is ignorant and undisciplined; he is poor and brutalized. With one of such miserable inclinations 'twere better to educate the mind little by little. I will make him one of my hired servants."

Then the son, famished and in rags, arrived at the door of his father's house; and seeing a great

throne upraised and many followers doing homage to him who sat upon it, was awed by the pomp and the wealth around. Instantly he fled once more to the highway. "This," he thought, "is the house of the poor man. If I stay at the palace of the king perhaps I shall be thrown into prison."

Then the father sent messengers after his son; who was caught and brought back in spite of his cries and lamentations. When he reached his father's house he fell down fainting with fear, not recognizing his father, and believing that he was about to suffer some cruel punishment. The father ordered his servants to deal tenderly with the poor man, and sent two labourers of his own rank of life to engage him as a servant on the estate. They gave him a broom and a basket, and engaged him to clean up the dung-heap at a double wage.

From the window of his palace the rich man watched his son at his work; and disguising himself one day as a poor man, and covering his limbs with dust and dirt, he approached his son and said, "Stay here, good man, and I will provide you with food and clothing. You are honest,

you are industrious. Look upon me as your father."

After many years the father felt his end approaching, and he summoned his son and the officers of the king, and announced to them the secret that he had so long kept. The poor man was really his son, who in early days had wandered away from him; and now that he was conscious of his former debased condition, and was able to appreciate and retain vast wealth, he was determined to hand over to him his entire treasure. The poor man was astonished at this sudden change of fortune, and overjoyed at meeting his father once more.

The parables of Buddha are reported in the Lotus of the Perfect Law to be veiled from the ignorant by means of an enigmatic form of language. The rich man of this parable, with his throne adorned by flowers and garlands of jewels, is announced to be Tathagata (~~God~~), who dearly loves all his children, and has prepared for them vast spiritual treasures. But each son of Tathagata has miserable inclinations. He prefers the dung-heap to the pearl mani. To teach such a man

Tathagata is obliged to employ inferior agents, the monk and the ascetic, and to wean him by degrees from the lower objects of desire. When he speaks himself, he is forced to veil much of his thought, as it would not be understood. His sons feel no joy on hearing spiritual things. Little by little must their minds be trained and disciplined for higher truths.

#### PARABLE OF THE WOMAN AT THE WELL.

Ananda, a favourite disciple of Buddha, was once athirst, having travelled far. At a well he encountered a girl named Matanga, and asked her to give him some water to drink. But she, being a woman of low caste, was afraid of contaminating a holy Brahmana, and refused humbly.

"I ask not for caste, but for water!" said Ananda. His condescension won the heart of the girl Matanga.

It happened that she had a mother cunning in love philtres and weird arts, and when this woman heard how much her daughter was in love, she threw her magic spells round the disciple and

brought him to her cave. Helpless, he prayed to Buddha, who forthwith appeared and cast out the wicked demons.

But the girl Matanga was still in wretched plight. At last she determined to repair to Buddha himself and appeal to him.

The Great Physician, reading the poor girl's thought, questioned her gently—

“Supposing that you marry my disciple, can you follow him everywhere?”

“Everywhere!” said the girl.

“Could you wear his clothes, sleep under the same roof?” said Buddha, alluding to the nakedness and beggary of the “houseless one.”

By slow degrees the girl began to take in his meaning, and at last she took refuge in the Three Great Pearls.

#### THE STORY OF VASAVADATTA.

At Mathura was a courtesan named Vasavadatta. She fell violently in love with one of the actual disciples of Buddha named Upagupta, and sent her servant to him to declare her passion.

Upagupta was young and of singular beauty. In a short time the servant returned with the following enigmatic reply :—

“The time has not yet arrived when the disciple Upagupta will pay a visit to the courtesan Vāsavadatta !”

Vasavadatta was astonished at this reply. Her class at this time was a caste, a body organized, and indeed fostered, by the State, and she lived in great magnificence. She was the most beautiful woman in the king's dominions, and not accustomed to have her love rejected. When her first moments of petulance had passed, she reflected that the young man was poor. Again she sent her servant to Upagupta. “Tell him that Vasavadatta desires love, not gold and pearls.” By-and-by the servant returned with the same enigmatic answer, “The time has not yet arrived when the disciple Upagupta will visit the courtesan Vasavadatta !”

Some few months after this, Vasavadatta had a love intrigue with the head of the artisans of Mathura, and whilst this was in progress a very wealthy merchant arrived at the city with five



hundred horses that he desired to sell. Hearing of the beauty of Vasavadatta, he contrived to see her and also to fall in love with her. His pearls and suvernas were too much for the giddy woman. She assassinated the head of the artisans and ordered his corpse to be flung on a dung-heap. By-and-by his relations, alarmed at his disappearance, caused a search to be made, and the body was found.

Vasavadatta was arrested and carried before the king, who gave orders that her ears, her nose, her hands, and her feet should at once be cut off by the common executioner and her body flung in a grave-yard. Her maid still clung to her, for she had been a kind mistress. She tried to assuage her pain, and drove away the crows from her bleeding body.

Vasavadatta now received a third message from Upagupta: "The time *has* arrived when the disciple Upagupta will pay a visit to the courtesan Vasavadatta!" The poor woman, in whom an echo of the old passion still reverberated, hurriedly ordered her maid to collect and hide away under a cloth her severed feet and limbs, the poor remnants

of her old beauty; and when the young man appeared she said with some petulance—

“Once this body was fragrant like the lotus, and I offered you my love. In those days I was covered with pearls and fine muslin. Now I am mangled and covered with filth and blood. My hands, my feet, my nose, my ears have been struck off by the common executioner!”

The young man with great gentleness comforted poor Vasavadatta in her agony. “Sister, it is not for my pleasure and happiness that I now draw near.” And he pointed out the “true nature” of the charms that she mourned. He showed her that they had proved torments and not joys, and that if immodesty, and vanity, and greed, and the murderous instinct had been lopped away, she had sustained a gain and not a loss. He then told her of the Tathagata that he had seen walking upon this very earth, a Tathagata who specially loves the suffering.

His speech brought calm to the soul of Vasavadatta. She died after having professed her faith in Buddha.

She was carried by spirits to the penitential heavens of the Devaloka.

## PARABLE OF THE BLAZING MANSION.

Once there was an old man, broken, decrepit, but very rich. He possessed much land and many gold pieces. Moreover, he possessed a large rambling mansion which also showed plain proofs of time's decay. Its rafters were worm-eaten; its pillars were rotten; its galleries were tumbling down; the thatch on its roof was dry and combustible. Inside this mansion were several hundreds of the old man's servants and retainers, so extensive was the collection of rambling old buildings.

Unfortunately this mansion possessed only one door.

The old man was also the father of many children—five, ten, twenty, let us say. One day there was a smell of burning, and he ran out by the solitary door. To his horror he saw the thatch in a mass of flame, the rotten old pillars were catching fire one by one, the rafters were blazing like tinder. Inside, his children, whom he loved most tenderly,

were romping and amusing themselves with their toys.

The distracted father said to himself, "I will run in and save my children. I will seize them in my strong arms. I will bear them harmless through the falling rafters and the blazing beams!" Then the sad thought seized him that his children were romping and ignorant. "If I tell them that the house is on fire they will not understand me. If I try to seize them they will romp about and try to escape. Alas! not a moment is to be lost!"

Suddenly a bright thought flashed across the old man's mind. "My children are ignorant," he mentally said, "but they love toys and glittering playthings. I will promise them some playthings of unheard-of beauty. Then they will listen to me!"

So the old man shouted out with a loud voice, "Children, children, come out of the house and see these beautiful toys. Chariots with white oxen, all gold and tinsel. See these exquisite little antelopes! Whoever saw such goats as these! Children, children, come quickly or they will all be gone!"

Forth from the blazing ruin came the children in hot haste. The word "playthings" was almost the only word that they could understand. Then the fond father, in his great joy at seeing his offspring freed from peril, procured for them some of the most beautiful chariots ever seen. Each chariot had a canopy like a pagoda. It had tiny rails and balustrades and rows of jingling bells. It was formed of the seven precious substances. Chaplets of glittering pearls were hung aloft upon it; standards and wreaths of the most lovely flowers. Milk-white oxen drew these chariots. The children were astonished when they were placed inside.

The meaning of this parable is thus rendered in the White Lotus of Dharma. The old man is Tathagata, and his children the blind, suffering children of sin and passion. Tathagata fondly loves them, and would save them from their unhappiness. The old rambling mansion, unsightly, rotten, perilous, is the domain of Kama, the domain of appetite, the three great worlds of the visible kosmos. This old mansion is ablaze with the fire of mortal passions and hates and lusts.

Tathagata in his "immense compassion" would lead all his beloved children away from this great peril, but they do not understand his language. Their only thought is of tinsel toys and childish pastimes. If he speaks to them of the great inner quickening which makes man conquer human pain, they cannot understand him. If he talks to them of wondrous supernatural gifts accorded to mortals, they turn a deaf ear to him. The tinsel chariots provided for the children of Tathagata are the Vehicles of the Buddhist teaching.

#### FORGIVENESS.

Once to a mighty king in ancient Ind  
Were born two sons ; Kshemankara the first  
Was brave and just and truthful, dear to all.  
One day the daughter of a king, concealed  
Behind the purdah, chanced to hear his voice,  
She said, " He is my husband, he or none."  
Papankara his brother hated him,  
Papankara, whom jackals, kites and swine  
Greeted with gruesome noises at his birth.  
The king one day spake to his elder boy—  
" A sweet princess would wed thee, and her sire  
Has urged this union, marry her, my son."

Kshemankara replied, " An idle prince  
Brings little luck or joy to any one ;  
Give me a ship and let me sail abroad  
And see far countries, bringing back their wealth,  
Rare stones and silks and produce to my bride."  
The king consented; and a goodly prow,  
• With bamboo masts and sails of shining stuffs,  
Crept through lethargic seas and anchored now  
By islands of rich gums and cinnamon,  
And now near purple mountains, velvety,  
What time the sun from out a screen of mist  
Steeps sea and sky in floods of liquid gold.  
There did Kshemankara collect his gems,  
Moving his brother's gall; he too had come.  
But lo, a mighty change is o'er the sea;  
A dread tuffan is whistling through the shrouds,  
The waves are giant and the bellowing cloud  
Chases the blood from the young brother's cheek.  
They neared not safety, but an island grim—  
The elder brother said, " Cling to my waist ! "  
And with wet bales and spars of sandal wood  
The pair were promptly tossing in the foam.  
At length they landed, and the vast fatigue  
Of swimming made the elder brother sleep ;

The younger chose two thorns and drave them  
through

His brother's eyes, and taking from his waist  
A girdle filled with pearls, announced his death.  
Ten months have passed. To-day a fair princess  
Must choose a husband—'tis her sire's decree—  
And in bright tents are many sons of kings  
(And King Papankara, whose sire is dead)  
To win a smile from one who smiles no more.  
Drums sound, the trumpets blare, and once or  
twice

Is heard a low voice singing to a lute.

Up sprang the princess, "Tis my husband's  
voice!"

The angry king said, "Fetch that singer here."  
He was a beggar, grimed and blind. Again  
The princess said, "That is my husband there."  
The suitors loudly laughed; but in their midst  
The princess stood and raised her hands to  
heaven—

"Spirits invisible that watch our acts,  
That I have loved the Prince Kshemankara,  
And clung to him through pain and through  
despair,



Give evidence by a portentous act,  
Restore the vision to one wounded eye ! ”  
And lo ! the beggar saw, and fear seized all.  
Then said Papankara, “ A kingly bride  
Must mate a kingly spouse. The Shasters rule  
That such must have two eyes, in limbs be perfect ;  
This cannot be the prince. I saw him die.”  
The beggar then raised up his hands to heaven—  
“ A kingly ruler first must rule himself,  
If in the presence of a mighty wrong  
I nourish hate to none, if schooled by care  
And thirst and hunger, trusty councillors,  
I have been trained to rule the sad and hungry,  
Spirits invisible complete your task ;  
Restore my other eye ! ” And lo ! he saw.  
Thus was Papankara hurled from his throne,  
And at the jousts the princess chose her spouse.

#### THE KING AND THE FIG.

There was a king renowned in Indian story ;  
With bow and brand  
He spread abroad the record of his glory  
In every land.

Grey warriors said, "O'ne'er was such a leader,  
Wary and bold!"  
He had a palace built of scented cedar  
Fretted with gold.

One hundred courts with trees and plashing foun-  
And marble screens; [tains,  
Rare flowers like those of the Kailas mountains—  
A thousand queens.

He died, and from this world of adulations  
Was borne alone,  
What time court poets sang their base laudations  
To Buddha's throne.

Said Buddha, "What of this man is recorded?"  
An angel read;  
It was a tale of woe, blood-stained and sordid,  
A wail of the dead.

"O'er many a city, once the home of freeman,  
The ivy twines;  
Each daughter and each wife was made a leman;  
Men slaved in mines

“To spread the royal dress with many a jewel,  
So thick they stood ;  
Each diamond was a tear, congealed and cruel,  
Each ruby blood.

“A million slaves reared up a pompous building—  
Ten thousand died—  
Of marble ~~lice~~-work, flecked with gems and gild-  
The Fane of Pride. [ing,

“Vast crowds were butchered for his entertainment  
In war and shows ;  
They march in legions to his huge arraignment,  
Vassals and foes.

“Fetch him the Mirror !” On its surface speck-  
He gazed with dread, [less  
And saw a false old man, malformed and feckless,  
With brainless head.

O, who shall gaze upon that vision awful,  
The naked truth  
Limned by himself, limned by his deeds unlawful  
In age and youth !

Said Buddha, "Is there nothing true nor loyal  
In any page?"

"Once," said the angel, "in a province royal  
A plague did rage.

"And in the sun a dying pig was craning  
To reach the shade.

The king said, 'Watch those eyes of mute com-  
And give it aid!' [plaining,

"But o'er the courtiers was a deep dejection;  
'Twas Death's grim feast.

The king sprang down and, heedless of infection,  
Moved the poor beast."

Said Buddha, then, majestic in his kindness,  
"He is forgiven!

That deed wipes out the record of his blindness,  
And wins him heaven!"

Victor Hugo has made the king a Mussulman,  
but if one of the faithful had touched an unclean  
pig, such an act would have counterbalanced, not  
a life of evil deeds, but a life of good deeds.

## ALCHEMY.

A vain young Brahmin once was told  
Of holy spells that made red gold ; .  
This fancy vexed him day and night,  
His life was gross, his heart was light.  
Said one, " In Uravilva's wood  
There dwells the Buddha, calm and good.  
He knows all secrets. Ask his aid ! "  
The Brahmin sought the holy shade :  
Said Buddha, " What you wish, my son,  
May most undoubtedly be done.  
But gold is crime ! It whets the knife ;  
Designs the drops that poison life.  
It parents lust, and hate, and ire ;  
For gold the son will kill the sire,  
For gold the maiden sell her shame,  
Kings spread wide lands with sword and flame ;  
The sons of Dharma never tell  
Their mantras and their potent spell  
Except to those whose lives are pure,  
To those who've conquered earthly lure,  
Who know in fact the gold's true worth,  
The tawdriest tinsel upon earth."

The Brahmin said, " My life is pure,  
I've conquered every earthly lure ;  
Who, like a Brahmin, knows the right ! "  
His life was gross, his heart was light.  
One night the couple when the moon  
Hides for two weeks her light in June  
(The only fortnight in the year  
When man can make red gold appear),  
Sought out a cavern, where a rill  
Dashed down a chasm in the hill ;  
The mantras now were promptly told,  
And Buddha spread the ground with gold,  
Six thousand pieces the amount,  
A robber saw the Brahmin count.  
Then Buddha hurled it in the foam,  
Repeating as he journeyed home  
His solemn caution : " Son, beware !  
Use not this knowledge, have a care !  
But as they trudged, at break of day,  
Five hundred robbers barred the way !  
" O holy masters, we are told,"  
They said, " that you have countless gold.  
Said Buddha, " Gold sheds human blood,  
And so we flung it in the flood."

The chieftain said, "Such words are vain  
And one as hostage must remain—  
The younger one. So promptly hie  
And fetch the gold, or he must die,  
Within a week he will be slain!"

"Within a week I come again,"  
Said Buddha, "Fear not, Brahmin youth,  
A Buddha's tongue is simple truth."  
Grim terror pales the young man's brow,  
Will the great Buddha keep his vow?  
Five days have passed away too soon,  
To-night will end the weeks in June  
When spells can work; and if he wait,  
To-morrow will be all too late.

"O take me to the rocky dell,  
To-night I'll work a mystic spell."  
The gold was made. Quick spread its fame,  
A rival band of robbers came;  
"Divide or fight!" they loudly cried,  
When the broad pieces they espied.  
"He made this gold," the first clan said,  
"We give him up to you instead."  
O pity now the Brahmin's fate,  
He thinks of Buddha's word too late.

Though all unfit the time of year,  
The greedy robbers will not hear,  
They cut his throat ; and then assai.  
Their rivals for their lying tale.  
Swords flash and fall on sounding crest,  
On cloven targe, and stricken breast.  
Sharp cries of anguish over all  
Outroar the angry waterfall,  
Whose snowy stream is soon a flood  
Of dying men and human blood,  
Borne off to Yama's realm of death ;  
Two robbers soon alone draw breath.  
Exhausted with three days of fast,  
They watch the gold. Says one at last,  
" You guard the cave ; but we must eat.  
I'll to the town for drink and meat."  
One hied him to a leech's stock,  
One nursed a dagger by a rock ;  
• Each muttered, " Soon 'tis all mine own !"  
One perished, stabbed without a groan ;  
The other seized his drink and meat  
And soon was writhing at his feet.











